

6. Consultation and Coordination

6.1 Introduction

This document has been prepared with input from interested agencies, organizations, and individuals. Public involvement is a vital component of the Resource Management Planning (RMP) process and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) preparation for vesting the public in the effort and allowing for full environmental disclosure. Guidance for implementing public involvement is codified in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1506.6 and 43 CFR 1610, thereby ensuring that the BLM makes a diligent effort to involve the public in the preparation of RMPs EISs. Public involvement for the Central Coast RMP is being conducted in two phases, as follows:

- Public scoping prior to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis to obtain public input on issues, the scope of the analysis, and to develop the proposed alternatives, and
- Public review and comment on the Draft RMP/EIS, which includes analyzing possible environmental impacts and identifying the final preferred alternative.

A summary of public involvement during the Central Coast RMPA planning process is presented in Section 6.2.

6.2 Outreach

6.2.1 Notice of Intent/Notice of Availability

BLM published the Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare a Resource Management Plan Amendment (RMPA) and EIS for Oil and Gas Leasing and Development in the *Federal Register* on August 5, 2013.

BLM published the Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Central Coast Draft RMPA and Draft EIS in the *Federal Register*. The NOA marked the beginning of a 90-day public comment period.

6.2.2 Advertisements and Announcements

BLM published a news release on the California State Office website announcing start of the planning review of oil and gas development on public lands managed by the CCFO on August 2, 2013. The BLM published the legal notice in the following local newspapers: *San Benito Today*, the *Monterey Herald*, the *Fresno Bee*, and the *Sacramento Bee*.

6.2.3 BLM Website

The BLM also maintains a website (www.blm.gov/ca/eis-og) to inform public land visitors about upcoming events, activities, and planning information. It is commonly used to announce the availability of environmental review documents, including the Draft RMPA and Draft EIS for Central Coast Oil and Gas Leasing and Development. The website provides background information about the project, Citizen's Guide to NEPA, *Federal Register* NOI, all public scoping handouts, news releases, and a downloadable version of the Draft RMPA/EIS, announcements of upcoming meetings, plus an opportunity for people to e-mail comments directly to the BLM office.

6.2.4 Public Meetings

6.2.4.1 Scoping Meetings

Four public scoping workshops were held in January and February 2014 to initiate the public involvement process for the Central Coast RMPA. Each meeting included a PowerPoint presentation to provide context for the proposed project and an information package that included materials to introduce the concept of “scoping,” the Central Coast RMPA, background regarding the project, a Comment Sheet, and a map package. The public scoping meetings were held at:

- Hollister, California, at the San Juan Oaks Golf Course, January 29, 2014;
- Sacramento, California, at the Doubletree Hotel, February 4, 2014;
- Salinas, California, at the Cesar Chavez Library, February 11, 2014; and
- Coalinga, California, at the Harris Ranch Inn & Restaurant, February 12, 2014.

BLM’s official scoping comment period began August 5, 2013, with the publication of the NOI in the *Federal Register*. The comment period ran for 207 days ending on February 28, 2014 to incorporate the comments received during the public scoping workshops. BLM received 132 unique written responses to the NOI for the Central Coast RMPA/EIS. This included a letter from the non-governmental organization CREDO that included 10,577 electronic signatories and a form letter from three individuals. Members of the general public provided 110 written submissions, organizations or non-profit groups submitted 13 comments, and businesses submitted 2 comments. Federal agencies submitted 2 comments, local government agencies submitted 4 comments, and tribal individuals and organizations submitted 1 written comment.

6.2.4.2 Socioeconomic Workshop

A social and economic strategies workshop was held to provide an opportunity for local government officials, community leaders, and other citizens to discuss regional economic conditions, trends, and strategies with BLM managers and staff. The workshops assisted in identifying the ways public land resources are integrated into the local economy and way of life and in identifying opportunities for collaborative, stewardship-based management proposals. The workshop also devoted some time to introducing participants to economic concepts, the sources of economic data, the data itself, and the processes of economic analysis. The workshop was held in the Carpenter’s Hall, Marina in Monterey County on February 4, 2015.

There were 11 attendees at the workshop, including local agency representatives, oil and gas industry representatives, and members of the general public. Information obtained at these meetings is included in the social and economic analysis of the RMP/EIS (Sections 3.17 and 4.17) and elsewhere as appropriate.

6.2.5 Regulatory Required Consultation

6.2.5.1 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Previous formal consultations with the USFWS were conducted for the 2007 Hollister RMP/EIS with a Biological Opinion (BO) issued in 2007. This BO would cover this RMPA/EIS. Additional consultation with the USFWS regarding the RMPA/EIS is ongoing.

6.2.5.2 Native American Tribes

The BLM has initiated Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 consultation with the 28 tribal individuals, organizations, and federally recognized tribes identified as having interests in the planning area. Consultation conducted as required by the National Historic Preservation Act and Executive Order 13007 “Indian Sacred Sites.” During scoping, the first EIS update was mailed to 28 tribal individuals and organizations. Consultation efforts also included the distribution of consultation letters mailed to 28 tribal entities on January 15, 2014. In some cases a letter was sent to multiple individuals belonging to the same tribal organization:

- Amah Mutsun Ohlone
- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- California Valley Miwok Tribe
- Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe
- Esselen Tribe of Monterey County
- Mr. Andrew Galvan
- Ms. Judith Bomar Grindstaff
- Ms. Ann Marie Sayers of Indian Canyon
- Ms. Jakki Kehl
- Mr. Richard Larios
- Muwekma Ohlone Tribe
- Ohlone-Costanoan Esselen Nation
- Pajaro Valley Ohlone Indian Council
- Ms. Katherine Erolinda Perez
- Salinan Nation Cultural Preservation Association
- Salinan Nation
- Salinan Tribe of Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and San Benito Counties
- Santa Rosa Rancheria of Tachi Yokuts
- Trina Marina Ruano Family
- Xolon Salinan Tribe
- Ms. Linda Yamane

Of the tribes contacted, the Ohlone/Costanoan-Esselen Nation responded with a letter indicating a desire for consultation on any planned projects that may adversely impact known or predicted cultural resources and sacred sites within the tribe's aboriginal territory.

No other written comments were received from tribal agencies during the scoping period. Government-to-government consultation will continue throughout the RMP amendment process to ensure that the concerns of tribal groups are considered in development of the RMPA.

6.2.6 Other Outreach and Consultation

6.2.6.1 Federal, State, and Local Governments

The BLM sent letters to 35 Federal, State, and local agencies inviting them to be cooperating agencies for the project; however, none of the agencies accepted this invitation. The public scoping process provided opportunities for Federal, State, and local agencies to express their comments and provided meaningful input to the process. During scoping, the BLM received written submissions from two Federal agencies, the National Park Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and four written submissions from local agencies, Kern County, Monterey County, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and Stanislaus County.

Through the Memorandum of Understanding among the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of the Interior, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Regarding Air Quality Analyses and Mitigation for Federal Oil and Gas Decisions Through the National Environmental Policy Act Process, the BLM is consulting with the EPA, National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service. The BLM also invited the Forest Service to participate and is waiting for their response. The agencies will use a collaborative approach to analyze the potential air quality impacts of proposed oil and gas activities in the Decision Area.

6.2.6.2 Organizations and Individuals

In order to identify current issues and concerns regarding cultural resources in the CCFO Planning Area, letters were sent to 33 government agencies and historical societies, see Section 3.15.4 for the full list. No comments or concerns regarding cultural resources were raised by the respondents.